

## **Governor's International Trade Award Winners 2012**

**Delkor Systems Inc.**, located in Circle Pines, is one of the leading U.S. manufacturers of packaging machinery for food and consumer products. The company employs about 125 people, including a team of engineers and automation specialists. In the past two years, Delkor has made significant investments to develop markets in Canada, Mexico, Central America, parts of South America, Australia and New Zealand. International sales account for 13 percent of the company's revenue.

**Digi-Key Corp.** distributes electronic components worldwide from its headquarters and operations in Thief River Falls in northwestern Minnesota. Founded in 1972, the company has a major impact on the local economy, employing 2,550 people. Digi-Key sends electrical components to 170 countries and has 83 websites that support nine languages and 14 currencies. The company shipped products to more than 388,100 locations and 572,000 customers last year.

**Gear Grid LLC**, a Forest Lake manufacturer that has been in business for 90 years, makes wire and tube products for the retail display, fire, athletic and equine markets. The company employs 37 full-time workers. Gear Grid is a market leader for making storage products for professional firefighting equipment. To counter the recession, the company expanded its product line outside the United States in 2008. The company today has distributors in the United Kingdom, Germany, Hong Kong and Australia and exports products worldwide.

**Jet Edge Inc.** is a family-owned firm in St. Michael that manufactures ultra-high-pressure water jet-cutting systems. The company, which employs 40 people, has increased international sales of machine tools three years in a row and broke its one-month record for shipments last June. Jet Edge participated in the 2010 Minnesota Governor's Trade Mission to China and Japan, enabling the company to re-establish sales efforts in Japan, which had been a major export market for the company in the mid-1990s. About 26 percent of the company's revenue comes from international sales.

**KwikRink Synthetic Ice** of Maple Grove specializes in developing and applying synthetic ice for the professional and residential hockey markets. The company's products can be used for backyard, basement, garage, driveway and professional training center rinks. KwikRink, which has customers in North America, Europe, Asia, Australia and the Caribbean, generates 41 percent of its revenue from sales outside the United States.

**The Mayo Clinic** in Rochester has been serving patients from around the world for more than 100 years, beginning with the Mayo brothers, who traveled the world to share medical and surgical practices and learn from others. The clinic attracts about 5,000 foreign patients to Rochester from 130 countries annually. In addition, Mayo has developed technology that enables the clinic to serve international patients through e-consults and conferences. Mayo has representatives in many countries, offers global lab services and employs an international medical staff. More than 32,000 people are employed full time at the clinic.

**ME Global Inc.**, headquartered in Minneapolis, manufactures cast wear parts and steel and iron castings for the mineral processing industry. The company, which is owned by the Claro Group

of Santiago, Chile, operates foundries in Duluth and Tempe, Ariz., and employs about 330 people. ME Global began as Minneapolis Electric Steel Castings in Columbia Heights in 1917 and today supplies mining companies on six continents. Sales offices are located in North America, South America, Australia, India, South Africa, Bulgaria and the Russian Federation and employees over 330 people.

**Northwest Grains International LLC** of Edina exports agricultural commodities, primarily dried distillers grains, corn, soybeans and soybean meal. The company's main markets are China and Southeast Asia, including Vietnam, the Philippines, Taiwan and Thailand. The company has grown considerably in the past year and has added several experienced employees to increase business, with the goal of becoming the largest exporter of containerized agricultural products in the United States. The company, which has 10 full-time employees, generates 98 percent of its revenue from exports.

**PaR Sytems Inc.**, based in Shoreview, specializes in making automation systems and material-handling equipment for a variety of industries, including aerospace, construction, defense, food and beverage, life science, mining and nuclear. The company has installed thousands of systems around the world. PaR was launched in 1961 after spinning off from a division of General Mills that specialized in fuel handling and remote manipulation of hazardous materials in high radiation environments. The company employs about 360 people worldwide and generates about 15 percent of its revenue from sales in Latin America, Europe, Asia and Africa.

**Proto Labs** of Maple Plain bills itself as the world's fastest source of computer numerical control machined parts and injection-molded parts. The company works with product developers around the world who are under increasing pressure to bring finished products to market faster than the competition. Proto Labs manufacturing facilities are located in England and Japan for quick service to those markets. The company, which employs more than 500 people, has shipped products to 47 countries and generates about 26 percent of its revenue from international sales.